

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A PEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM ON
THE SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF A SELECT
GROUP OF URBAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS

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ATLANTA, GEORGIA
JUNE 1995

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ABSTRACT

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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B.A., SPELMAN COLLEGE, 1992

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Thesis dated June, 1995

This study analyzes the effects family, race, sex and involvement in the Irvington Peer Leadership program have on the development of self-concept and academic achievement in African-American youth in the city of Irvington, New Jersey. Students were asked to complete a preliminary survey to obtain background information on their family, the educational background of their parents and their views of the peer program that they were involved in. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was used to measure the self-concept of students and Math and English grades were used to measure academic achievement. Results were analyzed in terms of five hypotheses and it was found that GPA and sex had no bearing on self-concept. Family type and participation in the Peer Programs had a significant effect on the self-concept on the youth. These results are significant to the future planning and programming of more programs that address urban African-American youth. Further study is needed to broaden the study of self-concept, academic achievement and peer programs in other environments.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

How the learner perceives himself in his environment is becoming increasingly recognized as a force in intellectual development. The effects of this force, the self-concept as a regulator of behavior, motivation and academic achievement have provided the source of a great deal of theorizing, study and empirical research.¹ The formation of self-concept has provided impetus for similar activity. In this regard, consideration has been given to socioeconomic status, sex, intelligence, race, years in school and family structure.

Personality theorists, clinicians and social psychologists regard the achievement of a favorable attitude toward yourself as an important factor in personality development, and believe that self-concept is associated with personal satisfaction and effective functioning.²

The issue of self-concept cannot be expressed without

¹Anne Skone Johnson, "An analysis of self esteem and academic achievement of tri-racial isolate, Negro and Caucasian Elementary and Middle School Boys and Girls" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1973), 12.

²Jean Margaret Baldwin. "An analysis of the relationship between Self Esteem, Academic Achievement, and academic level of aspiration for a group of college students" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1969), 12.

discussing self-esteem. Comer and Poussaint, Kunjufu, and Moeller³ have used these concepts interchangeably. Self-esteem has become an important vehicle in social science and educational research for studying and understanding human behavior. In theory, self-esteem differs from self-concept. Self-concept is the image or symbol which the individual has formed as a result of his or her personal experiences. Self-esteem is the individuals evaluation of that image.⁴ Hence, self-esteem is an affective variable, involving an emotional appraisal of the "self" whereas self-concept involves the recognition of one's characteristics.

The ways in which a student views himself and his world are products of how others see him and are primary forces in his academic achievement. Many of the difficulties which people experience in most areas of life are connected to the ways they see themselves and the world in which they live. Students' failures in basic subjects, as well as misdirected motivation and lack of commitment characteristic of underachievers, the dropout, the socially disabled and the poor are, in large measure, the consequences of faulty

³James P. Comer and Alvin F. Poussaint, Raising Black Children, (New York: Penguin Books, 1992); Jawanza Kunjufu, Developing Positive Self-Images and Discipline in Black Children (New York: Penguin Books, 1984); Thomas G. Moeller, "What Research Says about Self-Esteem and Academic Performance", The Education Digest 35 (January 1994).

⁴S. Coopersmith, The Antecedents of Self-Esteem (San Francisco, California: W. H. Freeman and Company Publishers, 1975), 26.

perceptions of themselves and their worlds.⁵

Children growing up in areas of poverty can not easily see the connections among schooling and employment. As William Julius Wilson (1987) argues, children who live in a depressed, socially isolated, inner-city community where adult joblessness is the norm lose the explanatory connections that motivate them toward academic achievement.⁶

School, home and race are all institutions which affect self-concept in urban youth. Students who live in urban areas are bombarded by negative images of drugs and violence daily. Youth discover who they are and what they are from the ways they have been treated and those who surround them in the process of growing up. Youth who live in the urban areas of America witness negative images and are stereotyped daily. They are often guided by images of failure.

The development of self-concept and self-esteem emerges from the first contacts the child has with his family and environment. A child accepts the causes, problems, aspirations, and privileges of the group he identifies with.

Black male children in urban areas have a more difficult task because they are surrounded by the negative stereotypes of being gang members, drug dealers and high school drop outs. Many of our young black men and boys are in crisis. African-

⁵ William W. Purkey, Self Concept and School Achievement (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970), 29.

⁶William Julius Wilson, The Truly Disadvantaged (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 57-58.

American boys growing up in neighborhoods heavily impacted by poverty, crime, violence, unemployment, and poor schooling face substantial developmental risks and the development of a positive self-concept is one that is greatly impacted.

Black females are plagued with the problems of teenage pregnancy, drugs, gang violence, poverty, poor self-esteem and poor educational skills which could inhibit their ability to further achieve and provide for themselves in the future.

Enrichment programs such as the Peer Education Workshop and the Peer Leadership programs in Irvington, New Jersey have goals of enabling youth to realize that they do have positive options for their future and provide the tools for achieving those goals.

Purpose of Study

This study will analyze the effects family, race, sex, and peer programs have on self-concept and academic achievement in urban African-American youth.

Significance of the Study

This study will be significant in the sense that it will analyze the effects that race, sex, family, and peer programs have on African-American males and females. Various studies have analyzed the self-esteem of individuals but few (in the past 30 years) have analyzed the self-concept of black males and females in urban areas who participate in enrichment

programs. The writer will attempt to bring the educational, sociological and psychological arenas up-to-date on black youth and self-concept.

Definition of Terms

In this study, the definitions of terms, listed below, will be used. In the event that a different or altered version of the definition is used, it will be stated in the footnotes.

Self-Concept is the image or symbol which the individual has formed as a result of his or her personal experiences. It is the recognition of one's characteristics. Total self-concept will be measured using the Piers-Harris Children's Self-concept Scale which analyzes the self-concept in terms of anxiety, physical appearance and attributes, intellectual and school status, behavior, happiness and satisfaction, and popularity.

Self-Esteem is the individual's satisfaction with himself or herself. This term will not be measured in this study but will be mentioned as a form of reference for self-concept.

Socioeconomic Status is the level of social and economical recognition ascribed to a family because of educational, social and economical achievement of the parents or guardians.

Family Structure is the way the family is developed and functions. Family structure can be defined as traditional

(mother and father in the same household), or as non-traditional (single parent household or child living with a family member and the parent is not residing in the same location).

Peer Program is a program implemented in Irvington, New Jersey, where peer mentoring, tutoring, and enrichment activities are major parts of the program. This program is housed in the Irvington Public School System and its main focus is improving the self-concept, academics, social and practical skills of the student.

Academic Achievement is the level of mastery the student has accomplished and will be measured by the students grade point average on a 4.0 scale in Math and English for the past two marking periods.

African-American can be defined as descendants of African-American parentage.

Urban Youth can be defined as males and females below the age of 18 residing in inner-city areas.

Research Question

The writer will attempt to answer the question: Is the self-concept of urban African-American youth dependent upon their academic achievement, sex, family status and peer education experience?

Hypotheses

The following statements serve as hypotheses for this study on self-concept and its effect on academic achievement. These hypotheses will be tested on students in an urban peer enrichment program, "The Peer Education Workshop", in Irvington, New Jersey. The materials presented in the introduction and review of literature will support the writers' statements and provide a basis of acceptance or rejection by the conclusion of her study.

1. Students with low grade point averages, will also have a low self-concept.
2. African-American male students will have lower self-concepts than African-American female students.
3. Students who live in traditional households, will have higher self-concepts than those who live in non-traditional households.
4. Students, who reside in non-traditional homes, will have lower grade point averages than those who live in traditional homes.
5. African-American students, who have participated in the program for more than one year, will have a higher overall self-concept than those who have participated in the program less than one year.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter contains a review of literature related to this study. It includes an analysis of the historical development of theories of the "Self", including self-concept and self-esteem; the development of the self-concept in the individual; self-concept and academic achievement; and poverty and academic achievement. The literature will be organized to show a better understanding of the complex relations between self-concept and academic achievement. Although some of the sources listed are dated early they provide the background information needed to understand the present analysis of the self-concept. According to the information found, the sixties and early seventies seemed to have been a popular period of time to study the "self" and "self-concept". The resurgence of the "self" theories picked up again in the eighties with focus on adolescents.

Historical Development of Self-Concept

The word self has two basic meanings. One defines it as the agent or the doer and the other as knowledge of oneself,

or "the object of the person's own knowledge and evaluation".¹ The second meaning is the one under which the term self-concept has come to be used.

James (1968) differentiated between the self as known (me) and the "self" as knower (I). He said that "a man's Me is the sum total of all that he can call his". James stressed the continuity of the "Self" and the slow and gradual change that takes place over time and growth.²

Another theorist, who influenced research in the area of self-concept, was Mead (1934). He explained that "self" is a social process and develops out of social experiences. He differentiated between the I and the me.

The "I" is the response of the organism to the attitudes of others; the "me" is the organized set of attitudes of others which one assumes.... And it is due to the individual's ability to take the attitudes of these others in so far as they can be organized that he gets self-consciousness. The taking of all of those organized sets of attitudes gives him his "me"; that is the self he is aware of.³

In an introductory discussion by Gordon and Gergen on self as a construct, they wrote that "self-conception refers roughly to the person's subjective cognition and evaluations

¹R.C. Wylie, "The Present Status of Self Theory", in Handbook of Personality Theory and Research, ed. E.F. Borgatta and W.W. Lambert, (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1968), 729.

²W. James, "The Self", in The Self in Social Interaction, ed. C. Gordon and K.J. Gergen, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968), 729.

³G.H. Mead, Mind, Self, and Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934), 29.

of himself".⁴ They also suggested that the term "self-concept generally refers to a view of the self as a single entity".⁵

Another writer stated that "the self-conception is a construct which the individual forms in order to render social interaction that are predictable and manageable". This, again, relates to behavior based on the individual's self-concept. Also, this writer recognized the confusion in the use of "self" terms. He tried to clarify this by differentiating between concept and conception:

We are attempting to retain the technical distinction in meaning between "concept" and "conception", a distinction which is obscured by the frequent discussions of "self-concept." By the "concept of self" we mean the technical concept employed by sociologists, psychologists, and others who attempt to analyze human behavior; a "conception" is a set of imagery the investigator seeks to describe, explain and assess.⁶

Also he tried to clarify the use of the term self-concept and self-image. He described self-image as the constantly changing picture a person has of himself at any given moment and self-conception as a more enduring and unifying construct.

Coopersmith (1967) defined the concept of self as "an abstraction that the individual develops about the attributes,

⁴C. Gordon and K.J. Gergens, eds., The Self in Social Interaction (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968) 3.

⁵Ibid., 4.

⁶R.H. Turner "The Self-Conception in Social Interaction" in C. Gordon and K.J. Gergen eds., The Self in Social Interaction (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968) 90-93.

capacities, objects, and activities which he possesses and pursues. This abstraction is represented by the symbol "me", which is a person's idea of himself to himself."⁷

Although the term "self-concept" was not used in his analysis, another writer stressed the importance of the individual's view of himself which appears to be closely related to self-concept. He said:

In the final analysis the individual must know for himself the totality that he is. He alone has had touch with all his experiences. He alone knows his feelings and thoughts and what his experiences mean to him. The meaning depends on the values involved in the situation, event, or experience and these values come from the person's personal background. The individual alone can tell the true meaning of his experience.⁸

He went on to say that "maintenance of the real self is of primary significance for the individual. It is the most stable consistent value in his life". This maintenance must come from the individual's perception of himself and his behavior aimed at being consistent with these perceptions.⁹

Another writer says that self-concept and self theory are both a central and significant variable in human behavior.

Self theory holds that man's behavior is always meaningful and that we could understand each person's behavior if we could only perceive his phenomenal world as he does.

⁷S. Coopersmith, The Antecedents of Self Esteem (San Francisco: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1967) 20.

⁸C.E. Moustakas, The Self (New York: Harper and Row, 1956) 4-7.

⁹Ibid., 8.

Since this is impossible, our closest approximation is to understand this individual's self-concept. The importance of the self-concept is illustrated by the fact that not only is the self the most prominent aspect of the individual's phenomenal world, but it also tends to be the most stable feature. The person's environment is constantly shifting and changing but the self-concept is the frame of reference through which the individual interacts with his world.¹⁰

It has been said that the self has its own unique characteristics: e.g., (1) it is organized and dynamic; (2) it is the center of its personal universe; (3) that everything is observed, interpreted, and comprehended from this personal vantage point; and (4) that human motivation is a product of the universal striving to maintain, protect and enhance the self.¹¹

The self-concept has been presented as "the comprehensive value structure of the personality".¹² The individual sees himself as a certain kind of person holding attitudes appropriate to that specific type of person. The attitudes fit his role and status in life or the role or status that he aspires.¹³

¹⁰William H. Fitts, The Self Concept and Performance (Nashville: Dece Wallace Center, 1972) 1-2.

¹¹ William Purkey, Self Concept and School Achievement. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1972) 4.

¹²D. Katz and E. Stotland, "A preliminary statement to a theory of attitude structure and change", in S. Koch, ed., Psychology: A Study of Science (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1959) 445.

¹³Ibid., 447.

Some writers are most often cited as strong forces in the development of the construct of self-concept.¹⁴ They defined the basic human need as "the preservation and enhancement of the phenomenal self" where the phenomenal self is made up of everything "which the individual experiences as part or characteristic of himself".¹⁵ These writers said the "self-concept includes those parts of the phenomenal field which the individual has differentiated as definite and fairly stable characteristics of himself", i.e., the "more or less permanent aspects of the phenomenal self make up my concept of myself".¹⁶ An example of this would be an educator six days a week and to consider yourself an amateur barber when your son's hair needs cutting.

One famous writer analyzed self-concept this way:

The self-concept, may be thought of as an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are *admissible to awareness*. It is composed of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities; the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment; the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; and goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence.¹⁷

¹⁴Arthur Combs and Donald Snygg, Individual Behavior, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1959) 87.

¹⁵Nancy Simpson Cowan, " Factors Related to General and Academic Self Concept of Hearing Impaired Adolescents" (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland, 1981) 57.

¹⁶Ibid., 112.

¹⁷Carl R. Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951) 135.

The inclusion of the words "admissible to awareness" indicates an unconscious feature of self-concept. Also, Rogers (1951) discussed self-concept in terms of defense mechanisms. He felt that experiences may be repressed if they are contradictory to the self-concept of the individual. These experiences may later be recalled to awareness if there was a change in the concept of self in the individual.

Another writer theorized that understanding the uniqueness of the individual is a basic problem in psychology. In his eight factors that comprise the Proprius (self), he included two that closely tie in with the notion of self-concept. The first area "self-identity" shows continuity of the individual over time and includes the social interaction aspects of developing an identity (concept) of self. The other is "self-image" which shows the individual's perceptions of himself, other people's perceptions of him and goal setting based on these perceptions.¹⁸

This writer has a fairly comprehensive view of self-concept. He wrote:

. . . the self-concept is comprised of highly differentiated perceptions, beliefs, feelings, attitudes, and values that the individual views a part or characteristic of himself. The self-concept is formed as one identifies those aspects, qualities, ideas, and things

¹⁸G.W. Allport, "Is the concept of self necessary?" in C. Gordon and K.J. Gergen, eds., The Self in Social Interaction (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1968) 526.

that he regards as "me" or "mine".¹⁹

In summary, the single most important aspect of self-concept, as related to the early formation of the concept, is the separateness from other people and things. The child must draw on past experiences in order to classify things to form a concept. Also related to this is the idea of consistency or continuity over time. The emphasis on feedback, in social interactions, is seen in many views of self-concept as the individual develops the concept of separateness.

Development of Self-Concept in the Individual

The development of self in a child is dependent on a number of factors. It has been theorized that parenting practices can have effects on the development of self in children. Some theorists believe that the concept of self is formed early in a person's life perhaps as an infant. If this is true, it would be impossible to obtain introspective reports. Other theorists suggest that the earliest concepts of self are formed before language develops to the point where the child can verbalize his perceptions. For purposes of this study, it is assumed that the formation of the concept of self occurs during the early childhood stage of development.

Several theorists have described the formation of the self-concept in developmental stages. Erikson describes the

¹⁹H.V. Perkins Human Development and Learning (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1974) 249.

development of a concept of self through his Eight Stages of Man. In the first stage of *developing basic trust*, the child learns to trust himself as well as others. Erikson calls this confidence. In the second stage of *developing autonomy*, the child has developed some power over the muscle system and can now reach out to the environment. He sees the world as "me", "you", and "mine". This is the beginning to his sense of identity because he begins to see himself or herself as a part of society. The stage of *initiative* involves attack, conquest, rivalry and jealousy. In the next stage, *industry*, the child begins to master the environment in developing productivity. Then, in adolescence, the state of *identity* occurs in which many roles are played. "The sense of ego identity, then, is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others".²⁰

It has been said that self-concepts develop through interactions with others. Each stage of the socialization process is defined by the self-concept at that stage. The first stage is when the child becomes aware of the difference between his own body and the external environment. In the second stage, the child imitates other persons and can distinguish between them and inanimate objects. The third stage involves evaluation of self, stemming from concern about

²⁰E.H. Erickson, Childhood and Society (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1950) 129.

the opinions of others. Social praise and blame are important to the child. The forth stage involves having sympathy for others and bringing oneself into harmony with others. Moral autonomy is the final stage, and involves honesty, justice and other high values.²¹

Another writer explained the steps in this process. He said that the child develops this consciousness of self through play and game. In play he or she tries out roles that have been seen on the people around him or her. The game is a more complex social situation in which the child uses rules and regulations and takes on roles of all participants in the game. In this process, he or she takes on the attitudes of other people.²²

Piaget (1963) said that the child's development of a consciousness of self is extremely complex, but is an important issue. He suggests that because a child shows keen interest in himself, he is confusing himself with the universe and is unconscious of self. Eventually, the child comes to distinguish himself from the world.²³

The mirror -vs- model theory is another way of looking at the development of the self-concept. The model theory emphasizes the development of self-concept through imitation

²¹Cowan, 37.

²²Mead, 35.

²³N. Piaget, The Child's Conception of the World (Paterson, New Jersey: Littlefield, Adams and Company, 1963) 9-10.

and identification with others. This is based on social learning theory and self-reinforcement. The mirror theory or reflection theory emphasizes social feedback. Some proponents hypothesized that if the mirror theory was correct, a parental evaluation of the child would be positively related to the child's self-concept. Also, if the model theory was accurate, the parental self-concept would be positively related to the child's self-concept. They found the mirror correlations were stronger in every comparison, although there was a little more evidence of modeling in younger children than in older ones.²⁴

One writer surveyed some of the theories of self-concept learning and asked the question whether or not specific learning theories can be identified and related to specific theories of self-concept learning. She summed up the findings of this survey by saying, "theorists' descriptions of the self-concept and its characteristics are very sketchy, incomplete and apparently contradictory in places". However, she did make some generalized statements in relation to reinforced learning.²⁵

²⁴V. Gecas, J.M. Calonico and D.L. Thomas, "The Development of Self-Concept in the Child: Mirror Theory versus Model Theory" Journal of Social Psychology 92 (1974): 67-76.

²⁵R.C. Wylie "The Present Status of Self Theory" in E.F. Borgatta and W.W. Lambert, eds., Handbook of Personality Theory and Research (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1968).

Self-Concept and Academic Achievement

The instillation of positive self-concept has been linked to high achievement in academics. For generations, wise teachers have sensed the significant and positive relationship between a student's concept of himself and his performance in school. They believed that students who feel good about themselves and their abilities are the ones who are most likely to succeed. Conversely, it appeared that those who see themselves and their abilities in a negative fashion usually fail to achieve good grades. Academic success or failure appears to be deeply rooted in the concepts of the self as it is in measured mental ability.²⁶

Research evidence clearly shows a persistent and significant relationship between the self-concept and academic achievement in youth and in adolescents. Inadequacies in self-concept have been repeatedly implicated as causal factors in the academic achievement problems of inner-city minority children, and, as a result, inner-city students have often served as targets for intervention strategies aimed at augmenting academic achievement through enhancement of global self-concept.²⁷

Comer and Poussaint say that when children develop overall positive self-concepts, they become free and confident

²⁶ Purkey, 1970:14

²⁷Theresa Jordan, "Self Concept, Motivation, and Academic Achievement of Black Adolescents" in Journal of Educational Psychology, 34 (4), 1981: 509.

enough to go where their skills, desires, and opportunities will take them. They feel success improves self-esteem and, eventually, the self-concept, making it easier to take on the next challenge or tolerate the occasional failure. People with low self-concepts may never fully develop their talents or pursue opportunities because of self-doubt and the fear and pain of failure.²⁸

Although a child's identification process occurs and the self-concept develops at a very early age, the self-concept, according to Comer and Poussaint, does not really "gel" until the ages of 9-12 when youth go through identity crisis. Several studies have examined the relationship between attitudes toward self and academic performance of primary and secondary students.²⁹ Portes and Wilson found that academic performance, as measured by GPA, is related to the strong role of esteem and educational aspirations among black students.³⁰ Richman, Clark and Brown studied 195 11th grade students. They administered the Rosenberg General Self-Esteem Inventory, the Piers Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale and the Brookover Self-concept of Ability and School Achievement Scale. The investigators argued that research on adolescent

²⁸James P. Comer and Alvin F. Poussaint, *Raising Black Children*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1992), 87.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 87.

³⁰A. Portes and K. Wilson, "Black and White Differences in Educational Attainment", in American Sociological Review, 41, 1976: 414-25.

self-esteem has not dealt systematically with the interactive effects of gender, race and social class. They concluded that black men were less confident than black females.³¹

Moeller reported that school grades had a powerful effect on academic self-concept among sixth- and seventh-graders. General academic self-concept tended to be affected more by school climate, teacher ratings, and student commitment to schoolwork.³² Wylie's analysis of self-concept and academic achievement found that "children's views of themselves as learners have been frequently posited as important predictors of achievement motivation, and thus, of school performance"³³. In other words, children who view themselves as capable of academic success, presumably, work harder, and therefore, perform better than their peers. Hence, it is likely that children's academic self-concepts are heavily influenced by their current achievement levels.

Verma and Bagley believe high self-esteem children tend to credit their academic successes to internal factors such as ability or effort expenditure, rather than to external factors such as a powerful other or luck. Conversely, academic self-

³¹L. Richman, M. Clark and K. Brown, "General and Specific Self Esteem in Late Adolescent Students: Race x Gender x SES effects. Adolescence, 20 (79), 1985: 555-556.

³²Thomas G. Moeller, "What Research Says About Self-Esteem and Academic Performance" The Educational Digest (January 1994), 34-37.

³³R.C. Wylie, The Self-Concept (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), 131.

concept is negatively correlated with attributions of failure. In other words, low self-esteem children attribute their academic failures to a lack of ability. They say:

.in a multi-ethnic society, life affects not only the attitudes and behavior of ethnic minority groups towards the standards set by the dominant group, but also the responses to themselves and their groups. The way the individual perceived himself is largely a product of his or her social experience with others.³⁴

Hence, the process of educational achievement may be culture-dependent. Factors affecting the achievement of one ethnic group may not necessarily affect the achievement of another group. In urban areas where violence, teen pregnancy, poverty, crime, unemployment and poor schooling are everyday issues, the academic achievements of youth are competing with the "survival of the fittest".

Poverty and Academic Achievement

The level of developmental risk that poor children experience, of course, varies enormously, and it is influenced in important ways, by the depth and duration of family poverty. However, even among the long term poor, risks to child development vary according to the physical and mental health of parents, the availability of social support from outside the family, the place of residence, the resilience of

³⁴Gulendra K. Verma and C. Bagley, Self Concept, Achievement and Multicultural Education (London: McMillian, 1986), 184-185.

children, and other circumstances.

Nevertheless, developmental risks are significantly greater, on the average, for poor than non-poor children, and the more risks that children experience, such as maternal depression, unsupportive parent-child interaction, low family social support, and high levels of stress within the family, the more negative the developmental outcomes will be.³⁵ Poor children are more likely than non-poor children to be low achievers in school, repeat one or two grades, and to eventually drop out of school.³⁶

Kowalski and Reitzug say that many problems faced by homeless children, are also characteristic of poor children in general. These include dropping out of school, lower self-reports of happiness and lower academic achievement.³⁷

³⁵A.J. Sameroff, R. Seifer, R. Barocas, M. Zax and S. Greenspan, "Intelligence quotient scores of 4-year-old children: Social-environmental risk factors. Pediatrics 79 (3), 1987, 343-350.

³⁶M. Spencer, J. Blumenthal and E. Richards, "Child Care for at-risk children and the Family Support Act. Paper prepared for the Foundation for Child Development Forum on Children the Family Support Act, Washington, D.C. November (12) 1989: 1-37.

³⁷Kowalski and Reitzug, "Poverty and Homelessness" in Contemporary School Administration, 22 (2), 1993: 321.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

In selecting subjects to study and collect data for this study, the writer decided to go to Irvington, New Jersey, to study participants in the Peer Leadership Program, where she completed her undergraduate internship. The Irvington Public School District is in an urban area bordered by Newark, Maplewood and South Orange, New Jersey. It consists of eight elementary schools, a middle school and a high school. Students who reside in the city of Irvington are faced with the constant threat of broken families, single parent households, drug and alcohol infested neighborhoods and constant peer pressure.

In choosing a group of students to test the writer chose those involved in the Peer Leadership program because these students are many times classified by the school system as those who need extra help. Some are special education students who have been mainstreamed into the regular schools and are having a difficult time adjusting, and some are students whom teachers have recommended for the program because they can benefit from the mentoring and extra help.

The Program

The Peer Leadership Program was begun in 1987 in Irvington, New Jersey. At that time the program served a limited number of freshmen, sophomores and seniors in the high school. Today, the program has expanded to all of the schools in the district and serves some 900 students annually.

The program is very interesting and is preparing urban youth with the academic, social and motivational skills that are needed to cope in their settings at home, in school and in the future.

The Irvington Peer Leadership Program is comprised of various components. It includes the Peer Leadership Training Class, the Peer Helper and Peer Mentoring Program, the Peer Tutorial program, the Peer Education Workshop, and the Peer Education Training Corps.

The Peer Leadership Training Class is designed to teach seniors strategies in group dynamics, qualities in becoming effective leaders, positive role models and respectable young adults. The twenty-two Peer Leaders are twelfth graders who have been selected through a rigorous application and interview process. They meet five times a week where they are taught group dynamics, group support skills, and skills in building positive self-esteem that deal with anger, conflict resolution and other coping skills. Once a week, they meet with their peer groups to utilize the theories learned by

practicing the skills taught and helping freshman and sophomore peer group members become adjusted to the high school environment. The desired outcomes of the Peer Leadership Training Class for the Peer Groups include improved attendance and grades among both groups; improved attitudes; better understanding of self and others; a desire to stay in school and achieve, become united as a group and to build a closer bond between parent and child; parent, teacher and child; and the school, home and community.

The Peer Helper Program is designed to utilize the teacher as the facilitator. During the regular school day, the facilitator's students are seen as, and taught to be, positive role models and a model "Peer Helper Class". The targeted grade levels are third through eighth. The facilitator selects ten students per class to receive additional peer helping skills, and skills necessary to cope with life's high expectations, in an after school program. The facilitator acts as a liaison between students, parents, administrators, and central office staff on issues of concern in the classroom, school and the community.

In the classroom, the teacher helps students learn more and like school better, like and understand each other better, and learn to develop effective social skills. Also, they are expected to learn and teach peer helping skills. After school, the facilitator helps the students develop skills in assertiveness, empathy, problem solving, conflict resolutions;

dealing with anger, family concerns, AIDS awareness, enhancing self-esteem, self-concept, and self-awareness. The desired outcomes include improved attendance, grades and attitudes.

The Peer Mentoring Program targets grades three through twelve. High school students tutor their peers in academic subjects and they tutor students in the elementary and middle schools. The mentors facilitate group discussions; help students to understand and recognize positive as well as negative peer pressure; accept cultural differences; resolve conflicts; build positive self-esteem; and discuss issues of concerns. The desired outcomes include improved attendance and grades; improved attitude; better understanding of self and others; a desire to stay in school; the desire to avoid becoming involved in drug related activities; to become united as a group and to build a closer bond between parent, child, teacher, school, home and community.

The Peer Education Workshop is designed to train the students to educate their peers and community on issues of concern in their environment, by way of after school workshops, conferences, and independent study. The objectives of the program are to educate high school students in issues which cause concerns to their environment; help the students design activities to present at mini workshops for their peers, younger children and programs in the community; to provide a comfortable environment for youth to learn about prevention, abstinence, intervention, support and values for

clarification; to be able to understand cultural diversities; to be a support group for their peers; and to provide a better understanding of self and others.

The Peer Education Training Corps is comprised of selected peer facilitators who are trained to teach teachers and students entering the program facilitative skills, program objectives and coping skills. The objectives include training in dealing with anger; building positive self-esteem; training program personnel in peer skills to train classroom teachers in conflict resolution; and training peer facilitators in peer helping skills, group dynamics, coping skills, and program implementation.

The Subjects

Since young people tend to adopt the behaviors of those around them, youths in neighborhoods with high rates of social problems are likely to imitate negative role models or associate with peers involved in delinquency, sexual activity, and substance abuse. In some low-income black communities, drug dealers, gangs and street hustlers have become the role models that children emulate. Pervasive violence has its own consequences. It can make youths insensitive to violence and motivate them to arm themselves for protection. It can lead them to expect an early death, which makes long-term investments in school, job skills, or health seem a waste of time. Every young person needs survival and healthy

development which includes a sense of safety and structure, belonging and membership, self worth and an ability to contribute; independence and control over one's life; closeness and several good relationships; competence and mastery; and self-awareness and spirituality.¹ The Irvington Peer Leadership Programs foster these characteristics and thrive on the success of those who participate in the programs.

The participants, used in my study, are enrolled in the Peer Tutorial and Peer Helper Programs. They were randomly selected by the Program Coordinator. Ten students (five males and five females), from five different schools, were chosen to participate. They met on Saturday mornings and were tutored by older members of the Peer Leadership Programs in areas such as Math and English. Also, they were taught social skills including building self-esteem, coping with loss, career planning and other issues needed to cope as African-Americans in urban America. These included conflict resolution, cultural diversity, dealing with anger and career planning.

All of the subjects used in the study were African-American and ranged in age from 8-14 years. Table 1 shows the distribution of the participants.

¹Ronald B. Mincy, ed., Nurturing Young Black Males: Challenges to Agencies, Programs, and Social Policy (Lanham, Maryland: Urban Institute Press, 1994), 5.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF AGE, SEX, FAMILY TYPE AND PARENTAL EDUCATION
OF PARTICIPANTS.

Characteristic	# of Students (N)	Total
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	20	
Female	20	40
<u>Age</u>		
8-10 years	10	
11-12 years	15	
13-14 years	13	
15-16 years	2	40
<u>Family Status</u>		
Traditional	18	
Non-Traditional	22	40
<u>Maternal Education</u>		
Grade School	0	
High School Grad	12	
Some College /		
Technical School	14	
College Grad	7	
Some Grad School	2	
Graduate Degree	1	
Professional	0	36
<u>Paternal Education</u>		
Grade School	3	
High School Grad	10	
Some College /		
Technical School	11	
College Grad	10	
Some Grad School	0	
Graduate Degree	0	
Professional	0	34
<u>Length of Time</u>		
<u>Child in Program</u>		
1-3 months	1	
3-6 months	14	
1 year	11	
2 years	8	
3 years	2	
4 years	4	40

Data Collection

The 50 students were given a consent form (see appendix A) to take home to get parental permission to participate in the study. Although parental permission had already been granted to participate in the Peer Leadership Programs, permission had to be obtained in order to obtain grades in Math and English or Reading and information gained in the survey. Of the fifty consent forms distributed, forty forms were returned with appropriate signatures. Hence, forty students were used in my study. Once consent forms were gathered, the youth were then given a preliminary survey to complete. The school facilitators were responsible for distributing the consent forms and preliminary surveys.

The survey was used to obtain background information such as family structure, race, sex, opinions of the peer program from the students and to obtain grades for the students. Grades were used from the first marking period of the 1994-95 school year and the third marking period of the 1994-95 school year. The grades were used to calculate academic achievement in relation to participation in the Peer Program and evaluate the effects of tutoring on the grades of the participants.

The students were administered the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, according to the published directions, to measure their total self-concept. Subjects were tested in groups of 10. Directions for the Piers-Harris were explained to the students as was the importance of them

being open and honest on all questions. As an incentive for the participants to return consent forms, complete the survey and the Piers-Harris self-concept scale, the Program Coordinator agreed to give all of the participants Peer Leadership T-Shirts at the end of the program during the final awards ceremony to distinguish themselves as participants in this study. Information was coded to obtain a numerical response for questions on the preliminary survey and for the self-concept test (see Appendix B).

Instrumentation

The Piers-Harris is based on the child's own perceptions rather than the observations of parents or teachers. Subtitled, "The Way I Feel About Myself", the Piers-Harris assesses self-concept in individuals from 8 - 18 years of age. The test is composed of 80 items and six sub-scales. The sub-scales include physical appearance and attributes, anxiety, intellectual and school status; behavior; happiness and satisfaction; and popularity. The items, which are written at a third grade reading level, are simple descriptive statements that the children indicate whether the items apply to them by selecting a "yes" or "no" response. Summary scores give an overall measure of self-concept.

According to one writer, "The Piers-Harris appears to be the best children's self-concept measure currently available. It is highly recommended for use as a classroom screening

device, an aid to clinical assessment, and a research tool".²

The use of a self-report, such as the Piers-Harris, has been under fire for some time now. The validity and reliability of self-report inventories have been controversial through the years. Self-reports seem to be valuable sources of information about the individual. One writer believes that the individual has the right to be believed when he reports his feelings about himself.³ One writer of another study concluded that their self-report instrument was useful in getting at meaningful self-attributes quickly and with a minimum effort.⁴ Major critics of self-report inventories believe that, while the self-concept is what an individual believes about himself, the self-report is only what he is willing and able to disclose to someone else. Another writer made this statement about self-concept:

We would like to assume that a subject's self-report responses are determined by his phenomenal field. However, we know that it would be naive to take this for granted, since it is obvious that such responses may also be influenced by the: a) subject's intent to select what he wishes to reveal to the examiner, (b) subject's intent to say that he has attitudes or perceptions which he doesn't

²Oscar Krisen Buros, ed., Intelligence Tests and Reviews (Highland Park, New Jersey: Gryphon Press, 1975). 196.

³G. Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), 78.

⁴T. R. Sarbin and B.G. Rosenberg, "Contributions to role-taking theory: IV. Method for obtaining a quantitative estimate of self." Journal of Social Psychology 42 1966: 80-81.

have, (c) subject's response habits, particularly those involving introspection and the use of language, and (d) host of situational and methodological factors which may not only induce variations of (a), (b), and (c) but may exert other more superficial influences on the responses obtained.⁵

There are several contaminating variables in self reports. However, when self-report instruments are used sensitively in conjunction with other evidence, they can be used to obtain rich insights into how the child sees himself and his world.⁶

⁵R.C. Wright, The self-concept: A critical survey of pertinent research literature (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961) 24; quoted in William Purkey, Self Concept and School Achievement (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1970), 60.

⁶William Purkey Self Concept and School Achievement (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970), 61.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement and to determine if the Irvington Peer Program had a positive effect on both.

An analysis of the data and the findings of the study are presented in this chapter. As an introduction to this section it is necessary to review the interpretation of raw scores as reported by the formulators of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (1984). Included in the following chart are the number of participants in the study who scored in the defined range to give an overall view of where these students fell.

The first hypothesis states that students with low grade point averages also have low self-concept.

In collecting and analyzing the data, students with grade point averages below 2.0 on a 4.0 scale were filtered out as were their self-concept scores. Of the 40 participants, eleven (11) had low grade point averages. Low self-concept is classified as a total self-concept score below 45. The mean self-concept score was 53.82 for the eleven students who had low grade point averages. The standard deviation was 10.25

which indicates a wide range (39 - 71) of scores for this group. The mean grade point average was 1.23 on a four point scale. The standard deviation of the grade point average was .36 which indicates a low GPA for this small group of students.

My second hypothesis says that males have a lower self-concept than females.

The distribution of male and female participants were equal, however the mean of the scores varies. The mean of self-concept scores for males (60.45) was much larger than that of females (56.20). The t-value was 1.1053. A standard deviation of 7.72 indicates that the male subjects self-concept scores were more homogeneous than those of the female group whose standard deviation was 14.98. Table 2 contains information about the participants gender and self-concept.

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF SUBJECTS' GENDER AND SELF-CONCEPT SCORES

Statistics	N	<u>Self Concept Scores</u>	
		Males	Females
Mean	20	60.45	56.20
Standard Dev.		7.72	14.98
Standard Error M1			1.726
Standard Error M2			3.350
Difference			4.260
Standard Error of Difference			3.845
t-value			1.1053

The third hypothesis stated that students who live in traditional households have a higher self-concept than those who live in non-traditional households.

The mean self-concept scores were 60.10 and 56.86 for those students living in traditional and non-traditional homes, respectively. This difference of 3.24 was not significantly different although this difference favored those subjects who lived in traditional homes. Table 3 contains information about participant family type and self-concept.

TABLE 3
A COMPARISON OF SUBJECTS' FAMILY TYPE AND
SELF-CONCEPT SCORES

Statistics	N	<u>Self-Concept Scores</u>		
		Traditional	N	Non-Traditional
Mean	18	60.10	22	56.86
Standard Dev.		12.10		12.55
Standard Error M1				2.852
Standard Error M2				2.676
Difference				3.240
Standard Error of Difference				3.912
t-value				.828

The forth hypothesis which stated that students who reside in non-traditional households have lower grade point averages than those who live in traditional households.

The mean grade point averages were 2.32 for subjects living in traditional homes and 2.29 for those living in non-traditional homes. This difference of .03 was not

significantly different. Again, this difference favored the subjects who lived in traditional homes. Table 4 contains information on participant family type and grade point average.

TABLE 4
A COMPARISON OF SUBJECTS' GRADE POINT AVERAGES AND
FAMILY TYPE

Statistics	N	<u>Grade Point Average</u>	
		Traditional	N Non-Traditional
Mean	18	2.32	22 2.29
Standard Dev.		.87	.76
Standard Error M1			.2053
Standard Error M2			.1625
Difference			.0300
Standard Error of Difference			.2674
t-value			.1122

The fifth hypotheses says that students who have participated in the program for more than one year have a higher overall self-concept than those who have participated less than one year.

The students who have participated in the program for one year or more had a self-concept mean of 59.28 and a standard deviation of 13.09. Those who have participated for less than one year had a self-concept mean of 56.73 and a standard deviation of 10.05. Table 5 contains information about participant self-concept and time of participation.

TABLE 5
A COMPARISON OF SUBJECTS SELF-CONCEPT SCORES AND
TIME OF PARTICIPATION

Statistics	N	<u>Self-Concept Scores</u>	
		≥ 1 year	< 1 year
Mean	14	62.50	56.08
Standard Dev.		6.68	13.67
Standard Error M1			2.618
Standard Error M2			2.595
Difference			2.550
Standard Error of Difference			4.034
t-value			.6321

Discussion of Findings

Each finding will be discussed and related to the respective hypothesis and discussions are considered in the following order:

H1: Students, with low grade point averages, will also have low self-concepts.

The mean self-concept score was 53.82 which falls in the average range of 45 - 60. The mean grade point average was 1.23. This hypothesis was not confirmed.

H2: African-American male students will have lower self-concepts than African-American female students.

The mean male student self-concept score was 60.45 while the mean female score was 56.20. The male students' mean self-concept score was 7.26 points higher than that of the female

students. The t-value was 1.1053 which failed to reach the critical value at the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the hypothesis was not confirmed.

H3: Students who live in traditional households, will have higher self-concepts than those who live in non-traditional homes.

The mean self-concept score was 60.10 for the students living in traditional homes and 56.68 for those living in non-traditional homes. The difference was 3.24. The t-value was .8282 which failed to reach the critical level for the .05 level of confidence. Therefore, the hypothesis was not confirmed.

H4: Students, who reside in non-traditional homes, will have lower grade point averages than those who live in traditional homes.

The mean grade point averages were 2.29 for those residing in non-traditional homes and 2.32 for those residing in traditional homes. The difference was .03 and the t-value was .1122 which failed to reach the critical value at the .05 level of confidence.

H5: African-American students, who have participated in the program for more than one year will have a higher overall self-concept than those who have participated less than one year.

The mean self-concept for those who have participated more than one year was 59.28 and for those who have participated

for less than one year had a mean self-concept score of 56.73. The t-value of .6321 failed to reach the critical value at the .05 level of confidence. The difference was favorable to the hypothesis.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The relationship of self-concept to academic achievement has been clearly defined. Those with strong positive self images are better able to perform academically. Programs which positively foster the development of these images as well as the development of academic skills work to improve the achievement of youth, especially African-American in urban areas. This study was designed to identify variables which contribute to the self-concept and academic achievement of urban African-American youth.

Variables were included that have been shown to have some relationship to self-concept of these youth with special emphasis being given to the Peer mentoring and tutorial programs which act as an outlet and self-image builder in the Irvington, New Jersey African-American community.

Theoretically, I looked at the development of the self. Various theorists identify the development of self with the general surroundings and experiences. Something which is quite complex in the lives of not only African-American youth but urban youth. This development of the self, takes on

various obstacles when paired with broken homes, low aspirations, lack of positive role models, drugs, violence, short life expectancy and lack of lifetime goals.

This investigation was undertaken as an exploratory attempt to better understand the variables related to self-concept in youth. It also looks at the part Peer Mentoring and Peer Tutorial plays so that the educational and social planning and programming could be improved.

A review of literature in the areas of the development of self-concept, self-concept and academic achievement, and poverty and academic achievement provided rational for the inclusion of student variables. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept scale was administered to 40 students and additional information was obtained from school records and student questionnaires.

Findings

A thorough analysis of the data obtained from this study produced the following findings:

1. The mean self-concept score was 53.82 and the mean grade point average was 1.23 for the subjects expected to have low self-concepts.
2. A t-value of 1.1053 from the comparison of the mean self-concept scores of the male and female subjects of this study.
3. A t-value of .828 from the comparison of the mean

self-concept scores of the subjects who lived in traditional and non-traditional homes.

4. A t-value of .1122 from the comparison of mean grade point averages of the subjects from traditional and non-traditional homes.
5. A t-value of .6321 from the comparison of self-concept scores and time of participation in the Peer program.

Conclusions

Based on the results, as shown in Chapter IV, the following conclusions are suggested for the question asked in this study:

1. Is the self-concept of urban African-American youth dependent upon their academic achievement, sex, family status and peer education experience?

No clear, concise relationship was found between self-concept and the above variables. Using the five hypotheses to support the conclusion the results varied.

The first hypothesis sought to establish the relationship between low academic achievement and self-concept. The results of my study found that the students mean grade point averages seemed to have no relation to their mean self-concept scores.

The second hypothesis sought to establish the relationship between sex and self-concept. The African-

American males had higher self-concepts than did female African-American students. However, the difference was minor.

In the third hypothesis we looked at the relationship between family type and self-concept. The African-American students from traditional homes had slightly higher self-concept means than those African-American students from non-traditional homes. Again, the difference was minor but did favor students from traditional homes.

The fourth hypothesis sought to establish a relationship between family type and grade point averages. The grade point averages were not affected by the types of families in which these African-American students lived.

The fifth sought to prove that there is a relationship between involvement in peer tutorial/peer mentoring, self-concept and academic improvement. The self-concept scores were slightly but positively affected by the length of time these African-American students had been enrolled in the program.

Implications

The conclusions, drawn from the findings of this study, seem to warrant the following implications:

1. Students' concepts of themselves may function independently of the quality of their grades in school.

2. Students' gender may not have a differential effect on their concepts on themselves.
3. The type of home in which students live, [er se, may not be a significant factor in the way students feel about themselves.

Recommendations

The implications, drawn from the conclusions of this study, seem to warrant the following recommendations:

1. because of the significance of the self-concept in students' lives, more research should be done to obtain more valid information which may be helpful in rearing children.
2. that more research be fone on the effects of the home environment on students' self-concepts.
3. more time be allowed in future studies of the effects of the Peer Education Workshop on students' self-concepts.

APPENDIX A

Letter of Consent to Participate in the Study

"The Self-Concept of Urban African-American Youth"

Preliminary Participant Survey

Means and Standard Deviations of all Variables

Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale - Range of Scores

LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY
"THE SELF-CONCEPT OF URBAN AFRICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH"

Your child has been chosen to participate in a project sponsored by The Peer Leadership Program and Clark Atlanta University student Rhonda Waller. In this study, the Piers-Harris Self Concept scale will be used to identify how your child feels about his or herself in relation to their academic achievement and participation in the peer program. Information found in this analysis will allow us to analyze the Peer program and report the findings in a Masters Thesis titled "The Self-Concept of Urban African American Youth".

The information that will be looked at includes this and last marking period's Math and English grades as well as grades from their final report card of 1994. This will allow us to see if participation in the Peer program makes a significant difference in the lives of the participants. The youth will also answer a survey where they are given the opportunity to tell how they really feel about participating in the program. A final analysis will be written and submitted to the Clark Atlanta University Graduate School of Education and to the Irvington Board of Education.

Signing this Letter of Consent gives us permission to use the scores and opinion of your child in this report. His/Her name will be kept confidential at all times.

I, _____, give my child _____ permission to participate in the study "The Self Concept of Urban African American Youth". I understand that information collected for this study will be submitted to the Clark Atlanta University Graduate School of Education and the Irvington Board of Education for analysis. I also understand that my child's name will be kept confidential at all times.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

APPENDIX A

Information revealed in this survey will remain confidential. This survey will enable me to analyze your background information in relation to your academic achievement and environment. Please answer all of the questions to the best of your ability.

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Birthdate: _____

Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

1. Do you have any brothers or sisters?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, How many brothers _____? sisters _____?

2. Put a check by everyone who lives in your house:

_____ Mother _____ Father _____ Grandmother _____ Grandfather

How many of the following people live in your house? Put the number on the line.

_____ Aunt _____ Uncle _____ Cousin _____ Brother
_____ Sister _____ Niece _____ Nephew _____ Friend

3. How much schooling have your parents had?

Mother _____ grade school
_____ high school graduate
_____ technical training (secretarial, business or trade school)
_____ some college
_____ college graduate
_____ some graduate school
_____ graduate degree
_____ professional degree

Father _____ grade school
_____ high school graduate
_____ technical training (secretarial, business or trade school)

- _____ some college
- _____ college graduate
- _____ some graduate school
- _____ graduate degree
- _____ professional degree

4. How long have you been in the Peer Program?

- _____ 1-3 months
 - _____ 3-6 months
 - _____ 1 year
 - _____ other _____
- (How long?)

5. Do you like being a part of the program?

- _____ yes _____ no

6. Have your grades improved since you have been in this program?

- _____ yes _____ no

7. What do you like best about the program?

8. What do you not like about the program?

TEACHER QUESTIONS:

STUDENT GRADES

	This semester	Last semester	Last year's Final grade
Mathematics			
English/Reading			

1. Have you seen an improvement in the child's self-concept since they began the program?

- _____ yes _____ no

Explain:

2. On a scale of 1-10 (with the highest score being 10) rate the following:

- _____ The students desire to achieve
- _____ The students ability to adapt positively to the environment
- _____ The students attitude

TABLE 6
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF ALL VARIABLES

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Self-concept*	40	58.33	12.10
Age**	40	11.78	2.34
Sex***	40	1.50	.50
Family Type****	40	1.55	.50
Maternal Education#	37	14.00	5.87
Paternal Education#	35	13.47	6.25
Years in Program	40	1.41	5.76
Math GPA This Semester	40	2.23	5.42
Math GPA Last Semester	40	2.28	5.14
English GPA This Semester	40	2.33	4.89
English GPA Last Semester	40	2.40	4.68
Average GPA	40	2.31	.82

* Self-concept is measured in terms of the raw scores obtained on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale.

** Age is in years

*** Family type is coded a 1 for traditional and 2 for non-traditional.

Parental education is coded in years of education completed.

TABLE 7

PIERS HARRIS CHILDREN'S SELF-CONCEPT SCALE RANGE OF SCORES

TOTAL SCORE	RANGE	PARTICIPANT SCORES
75 - 80	Very much above average	2
71 - 74	Much above average	3
67 - 70	Above average	3
61 - 66	Slightly above average	11
45 - 60	AVERAGE	16
37 - 44	Slightly below average	4
28 - 36	Below average	0
20 - 27	Much below average	0

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